

# Facts and Figures to support School Travel Initiatives



Information for parents and schools

INFORMATION SHEET FS18

## Introduction

The following statistics, unless otherwise indicated in the references, were obtained from Transport Trends 2003 and 2004, and National Travel Survey 2003. You can see these publications on the Department for Transport (DfT) website: [www.dft.gov.uk/transtat](http://www.dft.gov.uk/transtat) or order a copy tel: 020 7944 3098.

## The journeys we make

### Road traffic is growing

- Total traffic, measured in vehicle kilometres, is forecast to grow by 22% between 2000 and 2010.

- Overall motoring costs have remained stable over the past 20 years. In contrast, in 2003 bus and coach fares were 34% higher and rail fares 36% higher than in 1980.

### We are travelling more

- The average number of journeys made in 2003 was 990 per person per year, a decrease of 3% since 1985/86.
- Average journey length has increased from 5.2 miles in 1985/86 to 6.9 in 2003.
- On average GB residents travelled 6,833 miles each year in 2003, compared to 5,317 miles during 1985/86.
- While the average time people spend travelling has hardly changed, at around one hour per day, increased car use has allowed them to travel further in the same time.

### Yet most journeys are fairly short

- 68% of all the journeys made in 2003 were under 5 miles
- 22% of the journeys made in 2003 were less than 1 mile
- 23% of all car/van journeys in 2003 were less than 2 miles and 57% were under 5 miles

### Rural Urban Variation

- In rural areas 14% of GB residents do not have the availability of a car compared to 35% in metropolitan areas and 39% in the London Boroughs.

### Gender variations

- Overall, 71% of adults in 2002/03 had a full car driving licence.
- In 2003 17.9 million men and 14.4 million women held driving licences.<sup>(1)</sup>
- While women make more trips than men trip lengths are generally shorter than for their male counterparts. This difference is greatest for those in their 30s and 40s, with men travelling 11,300 miles a year and women travelling 7,800 miles a year.

### We are walking and cycling less

- In 2003 we made an average 245 walking trips per person per year, compared to 350 in 1985/86, a decrease of 30%.
- In 2003 we made an average 14 bicycle journeys per person per year, compared to 25 in 1985/86, a decrease of 44%.



Department for  
**Transport**

The **Safe Routes to Schools** project is co-ordinated by Sustrans and provides support to local authorities, schools and parents. Sustrans is the UK's leading sustainable transport charity and works on practical projects to encourage people to walk, cycle and use public transport to benefit health and the environment.

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# Facts and Figures to support School Travel Initiative



- In 2003 we walked on average 192 miles, compared to 244 in 1985/86, a decrease of 21%.
- In 2003 we cycled on average 34 miles, compared to 44 in 1985/86, a decrease of 23%.
- On average we spend 16 minutes per walking journey.
- 39% of all households in the UK own one or more bicycles, but only 2% of all journeys are made by bicycle.<sup>(2)</sup>

## We are using cars more

- In 2003 we made an average 401 trips (as car drivers) compared to 317 in 1985/86 – an increase of 26%.
- Personalised travel planning projects, which provide people with travel information suited to their journey needs, has resulted in cutting car use by 7 to 15% in urban areas.<sup>(3)</sup>

## Some households have no car

- In 2002 26% of households did not have access to a car. 58% of households in the lowest income quintile did not have access to a car.<sup>(4)</sup>
- Disabled people are more likely than others to live in households without access to a car.

## People want sustainable solutions

Among people surveyed:

- They support pedestrianisation policies and accept restrictions on urban travel, such as traffic calming in residential areas.

- They are in favour of road pricing if revenues raised are reinvested in transport. But they do want motorway building.<sup>(5)</sup>
- Traffic calming measures in residential areas receive majority support (69%).<sup>(6)</sup>

## Travelling to school

- In general, the patterns of travel of primary (age 5-10) and secondary school (age 11-16) children are different. This is partly because of increasing independence with age, but mainly because primary school children live much closer to their schools.

## School journeys are getting longer

- The average length of journeys to school has increased between 1985/86 and 2003. For children aged 5 to 10 journey length has increased from 1.1 to 1.4 miles. For children aged 11-16, average journey length has increased from 2.3 to 3.2 miles.

## More children go by car and fewer walk

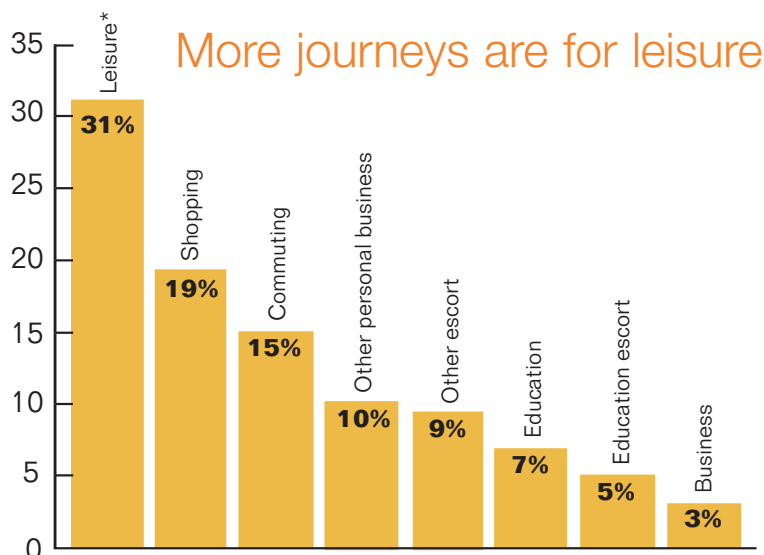
- The peak time for 'school run' traffic in urban areas is at 8.50am. In 1989/91 this traffic accounted for 14% of cars on the road, and had risen to 20% by 1995/1997. This has since fallen back to 18% in 2003.

## Fewer children cycle

- Males aged between 11 and 17 are the most enthusiastic cyclists averaging 126 miles per person per year, compared to 38 miles (average for all ages) and 22 miles (average for 11-17 year old females).

## Trend for independent travel may be changing

- The proportion of primary age children travelling to school alone (with no other child or adult) has gone down from 21% in 1985/86 to 8% in 2003.
- The proportion of secondary age children travelling to school alone went down from 46% in 1985/86 to 40% in 2003.



\*holidays, day trips, sport, entertainment, visiting friends, other inc. just walk

## Journeys to school by mode and age group

5-10 year olds	1985/86	1996/98	2003
walk	63%	55%	53%
cycle	1%	-	1%
car	26%	36%	39%
bus	9%	7%	6%
other	1%	2%	1%

11-16 year olds	1985/86	1996/98	2003
walk	46%	43%	41%
cycle	6%	2%	2%
car	13%	21%	23%
bus	33%	32%	32%
other	2%	3%	3%

Source: NTS 2003 and NTS 1996-98

## Variations in travel and access to services

- Adults in households with two or more cars travel on average nearly four times further than those in households without access to a car and make 60% more journeys.
- Over 1.4 million people are estimated to have missed, turned down or not sought medical help because of transport problems experienced in the last year.<sup>(7)</sup>
- The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 requires that, where it is reasonable, disabled people should have equal access to transport. The DfT estimates that only around 10% of trains and 29% of buses currently meet the standards.<sup>(7)</sup>

## Pollution and climate change

- CO<sub>2</sub> is the main 'greenhouse gas' associated with climate change.<sup>(8)</sup>
- By 2002 road traffic, mainly cars, was responsible for 22 per cent of total carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) output, 60% of carbon monoxide (CO), 48% of nitrogen oxide (NO<sub>x</sub>) emissions, 26% of particulates (PM10), and 28% of Volatile Organic Compounds (VOC).
- The majority of emissions from transport sources are from road transport, with the percentage share increasing from 81% in 1980 to 90% in 2002.
- The government has a target to reduce greenhouse gas emissions of 12.5% by 2010 below 1990 levels in line with the

Kyoto Protocol and a move towards a 20% reduction in carbon dioxide emissions by 2010, based on 1990 levels.

## Road casualties

Information about road casualties in a particular area can be obtained from the Road Safety Team of your local authority, which is usually located with the Highways Department.

### Traffic injuries cause most child deaths

- Traffic injuries are the leading cause of death in the under 16's in the UK. In 2003, 169 children under 16 were killed and 3,891 were seriously injured in road traffic crashes.<sup>(9)</sup>
- Research exploring reasons why child pedestrian mortality rates among English children are twice those of Dutch children reveals that the reason is not that English children spend more time exposed to motor traffic than Dutch children rather Dutch children spend half of their pedestrian time in traffic calmed/controlled areas, whereas only 10% of English children are so protected.<sup>(10)</sup>

### Our child road safety record is poor

- The death rate for child pedestrians in the UK is the second highest amongst Western European countries.<sup>(11)</sup>
- The total number of child road casualties reported to the police in 2003 was 31,988.<sup>(9)</sup>
- Pedestrian death rates for children in social class V are five times higher than for those in social class 1, and are higher for boys than girls.<sup>(12)</sup>

### Speeding is the biggest problem

- In urban areas in 2003 58% of cars broke the 30 mph speed limit.<sup>(13)</sup>
- A pedestrian struck by a car driven at 20 mph has a 95% chance of survival. If struck by a car driven at 30mph, the survival chance is 80%. For a pedestrian struck by a car driven at 40mph, the pedestrian's chances of dying rises to 90%.<sup>(14)</sup>
- Excessive speed is a contributory factor in over 1,000 deaths and over 38,000 injuries every year.
- The introduction of 20 mph speed limits cuts child pedestrian accidents by 70%, child cyclist accidents by 48% and overall



accidents by 60%. There is a 6.2% reduction in accidents for each 1mph reduction in vehicle speed.<sup>(15)</sup>

## Health

### Car fumes are bad for us

- Car passengers in slow-moving traffic face pollution levels inside a car two to three times higher than those experienced by pedestrians.<sup>(16)</sup>
- Emissions of the most noxious air pollutants arising from road traffic should be about half present levels by 2010, largely because of improvements in vehicle technology and fuel quality. But on current projections, the trend will reverse beyond 2010 as these improvements are offset by traffic growth.<sup>(17)</sup>
- Vehicles make a significant contribution to local air pollution. The deaths of between 12,000 and 24,000 vulnerable people may be brought forward each year; and between 14,000 and 24,000 hospital admissions and readmissions may also result from poor air quality.

### Asthma is on the increase

- Asthma is the most common chronic disease of childhood and it is on the increase in developed countries. One in eight children in the UK are being treated for asthma.<sup>(19)</sup>
- A Nottingham survey found that secondary school children living within 30 metres of an A or B road are twice as likely to wheeze as children living 120 metres away from a main road.<sup>(20)</sup>

### Physical activity

- 30% of boys and 39% of girls do not achieve the recommended level of physical activity.<sup>(21)</sup>
- All young people should participate in physical activity of at least moderate intensity for one hour per day.<sup>(22)</sup>
- A Hertfordshire study showed that Year 8 pupils walking the school journey each day used more calories than during the 2 hours of PE they receive each week.<sup>(23)</sup>

### We are getting more overweight

- About one in 20 boys (5.5%) and about one in 15 girls (7.2%) aged 2-15 in England were obese in 2002, according to the International classification. Overall, over one in five boys (21.8%) and over one in four girls (27.5%) were either overweight or obese.<sup>(24)</sup>

***Sustrans would like to thank everyone who has contributed photography including its own staff and Kai, Julia Bayne and RJM.***

***This information sheet may be freely photocopied for use in schools and local authorities.***

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## Further information

Visit the Safe Routes to Schools website [www.saferoutestoschools.org.uk](http://www.saferoutestoschools.org.uk) for:

- latest news and information on Safe Routes to Schools
- specific information on each of the UK regions
- downloadable resources including other information sheets
- case studies, curriculum materials and newsletters

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